The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and each other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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FLAG WAVING CAN'T CONCEAL WRONG

In sentencing Van A. Bittner, international representative of the United Mine Workers, to jail for six months and to pay a fine of $500 for contempt of court, Circuit Judge Lazzelle of Fairmont, W. Va., said:

"No man can be loyal and claim to be a true American who attacks any branch of government."

Trade unionists are in hearty accord with this sentiment—that's why they oppose the injunction judge. He attacks every branch of government, ignores the constitution and brings the judiciary into contempt.

Judge Lazzelle should practice what he preaches.

The judiciary is supposed to protect the constitution—the injunction judge ignores it.

When he says his free-speech and free-press gag is intended to stop violence, labor asks:

"Isn't this your excuse for aiding the employers in industrial disputes?

"What of our criminal statutes? If government by law can be set aside thusly, why not turn over the legislative and executive branches of government to injunction judges?"

The question answers itself.

The injunction judge dare not be logical. He and his backers must depend upon misunderstanding and a confused public opinion to justify this usurpation.

Van A. Bittner informed Judge Lazzelle that he did not know the injunction was issued. To a court possessing a judicial poise this statement should be satisfactory. It would be accepted as proof that the order was not intentionally violated, and the unionist, therefore, was not in contempt of court.

This was unsatisfactory to Judge Lazzelle. Bittner is directing the miners' unionization campaign in West Virginia. If he can be discredited this will be an aid to the anti-union barons.

So Judge Lazzelle insists that the unionist should know of his order.

The meanest criminal would be given the benefit of the doubt, but injunction judges are privileged to make their own laws. They have a free hand in adjudging guilt and inflicting punishment.

They are not hampered by precedent, rules or law.

And when the injunction judge jails his victim, he thumps his breast and loudly declares: "No man can be loyal and claim to be a true American who attacks any branch of government."

Labor must continue its agitation against this vicious process until the public understands.

KELLOGG NOTE TO MEXICO BRINGS BRISTLING ANSWER

Washington, June 20.—In a note that is marked by an entire absence of Latin finesse, President Calles of Mexico answers the demand of Secretary of State Kellogg that Mexico protect the lives and property of Americans in that country. Mr. Kellogg also stated that Mexico is on trial before the world.

The Kellogg note is called "amateurish" by newspapers. It resulted in a blunt notification by President Calles that he resents any threat to the sovereignty of that nation.

At the present time two commissions are hearing claims of persons who lost property through the last revolution in Mexico. One of these, President Calles points out, applies to citizens of all nations, though under international law Mexico is not bound to accept this procedure. The other commission is considering claims of American citizens against Mexico.

"As long as these commissions do not adjust the cases submitted to their decision," President Calles said, "it is irrelevant to charge Mexico with failure to protect American interests and violation of her international obligations."

The Mexican executive hints that the secretary of state contradicted himself when he referred to the great interest the United States has in Mexico's stability and at the same time refers to newspaper accounts of revolutionary movements in Mexico. This last statement, President Calles said, "tends to cast some alarm in the world in regard to the conditions of my country."

President Calles makes no concealment of his purpose to have Mexico maintain her position among the family of nations, rather than occupy an inferior position to some "big brother."

"The statement that the government of the United States will continue to support the government of Mexico only as long as it protects American interests and lives and complies with its international engagements and obligations," said President Calles, "embodies a threat to the sovereignty of Mexico that she can not overlook, and one which, with all energy because she does not accord to any foreign country the right to intervene in any form in her domestic affairs, nor is she disposed to subordinate relations to the exigencies of another country.

"If the government of Mexico, as affirmed, is now on trial before the world, such is the case with the government of the United States as well as those of other countries. But if it is understood that Mexico is on trial in the guise of a defendant, my government absolutely rejects with energy such imputation, which in essence would only mean an insult."

President Calles concludes his note with a solemn declaration that Mexico is conscious of her obligations imposed by international law, and that she is determined to comply with them, but Mexico will in no way admit "that a government of any nation may pretend to create, in the present situation for its nationals in the country, nor shall it accept any foreign interference contrary to the rights of sovereignty of Mexico."

INJUNCTION JUDGES HAVE THEIR TROUBLES

Washington, June 20.—These are troublesome days for the injunction judge.

Federal Judge Ross of Tennessee, who enjoined striking shop men, is the latest unionist to be exposed. This jurist, who was recommended by Attorney General Daugherty, cashed checks and drafts against attorneys who had cases in his court. The attorneys promptly to honor the drafts, which are now held by a bankrupt bank.

Federal Judge Kenyon of Illinois, who also enjoined striking shop men, is under probe by a congressional committee. This champion of law and order pleads ignorance of the law when he was a director of a bank in which he, as a judge, ordered funds of bankrupts deposited. He is known to be intimate with a referee in bankruptcy whose fees swallowed the assets of bankrupts, leaving nothing for the creditors.

Former Federal Judge Bludoe of California is another discredited injunction mill. He is known as "Injunction Ben." Recently he decided to run for mayor of Los Angeles and the voters did the rest.

JUDGE ISSUES NOTES THAT ARE DISHONORED

Jackson, Tenn., June 20.—Federal District Judge Ross, who enjoined striking railroad shop men and who attempted to jail Jacob Cohen, editor of the Memphis Labor Review for contempt of court, is involved in the failure of the People's savings bank of this city.

The bank has been closed. It has been discovered that it holds a dishonored draft for $32,000, that were drawn by Judge Ross. Two of the drafts, it is said, were drawn against Memphis lawyers who have had cases before Judge Ross. The lawyers refuse to honor the drafts.

The Memphis bar association has appointed a committee of five to investigate the charges against Judge Ross. A resolution adopted by the association declares that "a sense of impropriety" should cause Judge Ross to temporarily absent himself from the bench. Judge Ross was recommended to his present position by Attorney General Daugherty. During the shop men's strike he enjoined these workers and ordered the arrest of Editor Cohen on the ground that an article on strikebreakers that the labor editor published was a violation of his injunction.

The article was of a general nature. It had been published in other labor papers, and was not intended to apply to any particular case. Despite Cohen's claim that he did not have the Ross injunction in mind at the time, he was fined and sentenced to jail. The sentence was reversed by the court of appeals.

"FRAME-UP" FAILS; IRON MOLDERS FREE

Montpelier, Ind., June 20.—Charges against 47 members of Iron Molders' union No. 357 have been dismissed and the whirlwind of public opposition to these workers has been replaced by a belief that they were "frame-up" victims.

The charges followed a bomb explosion, two years ago. The unionists were on strike at the time. They were thrown into jail, and public opinion was so bitter that the accused could not secure a fair trial.

The county prosecutor was mainly responsible for this hysteria. One member of the union was convicted, and the policy of driving the other unionists out of this place was openly advocated. The workers' attorney A. G. Emshwiller, risked public ostracism because he dared defend the strikers.

Following conviction of the one unionist, more than a year ago, this community gave evidence of returning sanity. Re settlement was reached with the struck foundries, and the cases have been dismissed. The convicted unionist is at liberty under bond, pending trial on appeal. It is predicted that the trial will result in acquittal.

The prosecuting attorney is discredited and his political aspirations have been destroyed. He was employed by the foundries to secure an injunction against the strikers.

Labor Wins Long Injunction Fight; Courts Are Warned To Be Careful

Springfield, Ill., June 20.—The general assembly passed labor's injunction-limitation bill which permits trade unionists to picket and to persuade unorganized workers. These rights have been denied by courts in this state. The bill passed the senate several weeks ago, despite united opposition of the Illinois manufacturers' association and allied interests.

The law is a notice to courts that workers must not be restrained in the exercise of such manifest rights as appealing in a peaceful and orderly manner to sympathizers and non-unionists.

The Illinois state federation of labor conducted a masterly fight in the interest of government by law and appealed to the legislators to put an end to one-man government.

In the general assembly the fight for the bill was led by Representative Soderstrom, chairman of the committee on public utilities, who has been at the front of the labor line-up from the start of this legislative session.

FORMER FOES OF RESTRICTION HAVE NEW IMMIGRATION PLAN

Washington, June 20.—Former opponents of immigration restriction have adopted a new line of attack, and at the next session of congress will urge a "selective" immigration law.

The plan is favored by the national association of manufacturers, which has led every fight against immigration restriction.

These employers base their new activity on the theory that there are periodical demands for labor in this country, and that this demand should be met by government action. After a survey of the steel, coal or agriculture industry, for instance, the government would admit the necessary requirements.

The labor-shortage theory is in opposition to every governmental student who has shown that elimination of waste, and not production, is the problem in industry.

Labor-displacing machinery can fill every demand, and this can be increased by the elimination of frightful wastes and destruction of life.

In the May issue of the Monthly Bulletin issued by the United States bureau of labor statistics, Secretary of Labor Davis pointed out that in 1923 production increased nearly one-half over 1921, while the number of workers increased but 25 per cent in the same period.

"With our present iron and steel equipment we can produce in seven months our needs for a year," said Secretary Davis.

"Forty per cent of our coal mines employ 75 per cent of the workers now in the industry, could, by employing them all the time, produce all the coal that we could use or sell."

In his annual report, last year, Secretary of Commerce Hoover called attention to the nation's social wastes and the appalling loss of life in industry. In 1923 the number of traffic fatalities totaled 22,600 and the number of injured were 678,000, with an economic loss of not less than $600,000,000.

WARREN STONE DEAD; WAS ENGINEERS' CHIEF

Cleveland, June 20.—Warren S. Stone, grand chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, 1903 to 1924, died in this city from Bright's disease. He was 65 years old.

At the brotherhood's convention last June the office of president was created. He was elected to that position and placed in charge of the organization's financial affairs.

His funeral was largely attended by citizens in all walks of life. The A. F. of L. was represented by Martin F. Ryan, vice president, and Bert M. Jewell, president A. F. of L. railway employes' department.

"He served as grand chief of the B. of L. E. with distinction and was an outstanding leader among the railroad working people of America," said President Green in his message of condolence. "He was a pioneer in the development of labor banks. His services to the workers were invaluable. Through his death the B. of L. E. will suffer a distinct los. The members of the American Federation of Labor regret exceedingly the death of Mr. Stone, and as their representative I extend to his bereaved family and friends their sympathy and condolence."

Mr. Stone's energy and his application as chief executive of the brotherhood during many years wrought undreamed improvement in the lives of these workers," said Secretary Morrison in his message to L. C. Griffing, grand chief of the brotherhood.

DETROIT IS ACTIVE

Detroit, Mich., June 20.—Organized workers are engaged in a trade union revival, and it is proposed to interest 100,000 workers affiliated to the A. F. of L. The Pattern Makers' association is the latest union to contribute $25 a week to finance this movement.

FREE TEXT BOOKS WIN

Atlanta, June 20.—A city council committee rejected a proposal that the state legislature repeal that portion of this city's charter which provides for free school text books the next two years. $100,000, and a group of penny-pinching tax-payers urged that this money should be saved.

PUBLIC OPINION RULES; EVERY PERSON AN AID

Cambridge, Mass., June 20.—The world is ruled by public opinion by which all men assist in shaping, said President Lowell of Harvard university in an address here today.

"Public opinion is, therefore, of the highest consequence to mankind," the educator said. "But, after all, the stuff it is made of is only the opinions of individuals combined into a mass. In its formation, some men count for more than others, but everyone counts for something, and most men count for more than they are aware. We are too much inclined to think that hasty judgments, idle words, careless statements and passing impressions are unimportant; and yet these have a distinct influence on those who hear them.

"Every one truly counts to some extent, for, although many people form no opinions of their own, and merely reflect their surroundings — Laodiceans, neither hot nor cold; spineless drifters who are of no positive value—still they have an effect, and may both prevent the spread of right thought and promote the opposite extreme. They are a shifting cargo in the ship of state, a peril if the bulkhead breaks.

"This does not mean that all men should think alike. Men differ, must differ and ought to differ. But that does not affect the momentous results of wrong opinions, or the imperative duty of thinking aright. Nor is it any excuse that other people think the same. It is quite as bad, and often worse, to think wrong with the majority as to be in the wrong minority.

"We must beware of assuming that an idea is true because it is old, or because it is new, but try simply to discover whether it is true or not."

DEATHS IN COAL MINES

Washington, June 20.—During the first four months of this year 1,727 employes were killed by accidents at coal mines, according to the United States bureau of mines. During April there were 142 men killed.

BARBERS ORGANIZE

Indianapolis, June 20.—The Journeymen Barbers' International union has issued charters to newly organized locals in Niagara Falls, Utica; Nanticoke, Pa., and Charlotte, N. C.

FLEXIBLE TARIFF PLAN AROUSES OPPOSITION

Washington, June 20.—The president's refusal to lower the tariff on sugar, after the tariff commission recommended this course, makes it almost certain that an attempt will be made in the next congress to abolish the commission.

This board is part of the Fordney-McCumber tariff bill, and is supposed to provide for a "flexible" tariff. The commission is empowered to hold hearings on complaint that the tariff on any article is too high or too low. The commission then makes recommendations to the president, who may act on the report.

Last summer the commission held hearings on the sugar tariff, and recommended to the president that reductions be ordered by him. The president now declines to take this course.

The commission's hearings were marked by sensational charges that the wife of one member held stock in a southern sugar mill. Three members of the commission—Messrs. Culbertson, Costigan and Lewis—insisted that this member retire from the hearings. The matter came before congress, and the majority won their point.

The president's refusal to act on the recommendation has encouraged opponents of the commission, who also charge that this section of the tariff law is a violation of the constitution because it gives the president revenue-making powers which the house of representatives should retain. This phase of the issue, however, is a constitutional question and permits of wide difference of opinion.

SATURDAY HALF HOLIDAY

San Francisco, June 20.—Cracker bakers have secured the Saturday half holiday in their new agreement with employers.

TEXTILE WORKERS OUT; ARE FACING EVICTION

Washington, June 20.—In a circular letter to state and central bodies, Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., calls attention to a strike of 2,500 employes of the American thread company at Willimantic, Conn., that was forced on these workers March 9 because of a 10 per cent wage cut. President McMahon of the United Textile Workers informs A. F. of L. headquarters that evictions are expected and that between 8,000 and 10,000 people must be cared for by the union.

The wage reduction is uncalled for, as the company admits they paid 10 per cent on their capitalization and placed $1,380,000 in their surplus account.

"President McMahon requested this information be conveyed to the officers of the central and state bodies," said Secretary Morrison, "and your affiliated local unions will have the information of the cause of the strike and may render every assistance they can to help the textile workers win this strike."

MINERS EVICTED

Ward, W. Va., June 20.—The coal company at this place has served eviction notices on 200 miners who live in company houses. This company recently repudiated its agreement with the United Mine Workers.

OHIO WORKERS TO CONVENE

Steubenville, Ohio, June 20.—Officers of the Ohio state federation of labor have selected this city for the next annual convention, which will convene Monday, August 10.

STATE POLICE BILL FAILS

Springfield, Ill., June 20.—The state cossack bill failed to pass in the state senate on its third reading. Senator Kessinger of Aurora secured a lease of life for the measure by offering a motion to "postpone further consideration."

OUT-OF-WORK SOLUTION IS HIGH BUYING POWER

Cincinnati, June 20.—Increased purchasing power of the workers is the solution for unemployment, says John P. Frey, editor of the International Molders' Journal. Wages should keep pace with the workers' increased productivity, the labor editor declared.

"In America," he said, "more wealth is produced per employe than in any other country in the world and unemployment for large numbers is almost constant.

"Wealth, the result of labor, is piled up in enormous masses as never before and thousands of men, sometimes hundreds of thousands, return at night to an empty table because their search for employment has been unsuccessful.

"Many suggestions have been made to overcome the evil of unemployment. Economists and statesmen have given it their best thought: Practical men in industry have done likewise, and some methods have been suggested and applied which have, to a small degree, minimized the evil.

"To the practical, and particularly to one who is not wedded to any one economic or political doctrine, one fact stands out more prominently than any other. The increased productivity of the individual workman, due to the use of machinery, better and more effective systems of management, has not been equaled by an equal increase in the wage earner's power to buy.

"So long as the mass of people can produce more than they can purchase, men will feverishly work for a few months and then find it impossible to secure employment because the warehouses are full and there are none who can buy.

"No more certain way of solving the problem of unemployment can be found than to make the workmen's real wages keep pace with his increased efficiency to produce. So long as the worker's wages are insufficient to buy on a basis of labor's increased productiveness, so long will it be impossible to prevent unemployment."

HOLD MUSCLE SHOALS, SAYS FEDERAL BOARD

Washington, June 20.—The Muscle Shoals project, promoted by President Coolidge, has declared its opposition to private leasing of this water power by the war department before congress acts.

The last congress rejected a proposal to lease Muscle Shoals after a long campaign on the value that would result to farmers through cheap fertilizer.

While not indicating their views as to the ultimate form of operation, members of the board declare that it is said, regard Muscle Shoals as a national defense in time of war and a fertilizer plant in time of peace, adding that power should not be considered the all-important factor.

RICH BANK DIVIDENDS

New York, June 20.—The First National bank of this city has announced a quarterly dividend of 25 per cent on stock having a face value of $100 per share. It is generally regarded in the financial district that this will continue. The prospect of a share of stock paying $100 dividend in one year drove the market value of the stock to $2,500.

In 1922 this bank paid a 40 per cent dividend with a 20 per cent extra. Last year dividends totaled 60 per cent.

LOW RENT IN GERMANY DOESN'T HELP LABOR

Washington, June 20.—Low rents in Germany have not benefited workers, as the employer takes into account these rents when wages are fixed, says Paul Brissenden, student of labor statistics in its study of labor conditions in Germany since the war.

It is stated that the general standard of living among German workers after the war "was very low." Food, fuel and clothes were very scarce at first. When imports began after the blockade ceased the low level of real wages showed much improvement. The increasingly high cost of building and of wages, due to the depreciation of the currency, coupled with low rents, have resulted in almost no new houses being built.

The working class also paid more in taxes in proportion to their income than the wealthy class, contributing in 1923 and 1924 between 45 and 90 per cent of the income tax, as taxes on their wages were levied before the workers received them, thereby depriving the workers of the advantage of the depreciation of the currency which the government got.

While nominal wages increased rapidly, real wages were much lower than before the war. The wages of the lower layers, for example, which before the war had been 45 per cent higher than the minimum cost of subsistence, were during the minimum cost of existence in 28 of the 60 months from January, 1920, to December, 1924.

In August, 1921, employers, especially in the heavy industries, began a movement against the eight-hour day, and on December 21, 1923, the government issued a decree which, while it maintained the principle of the eight-hour day, permitted certain exemptions by collective agreement and by official permit.

FOOD COSTS GO UP

Washington, June 20.—From April 15 to May 15 food costs increased in 15 of the 20 cities reporting to the United States bureau of labor statistics.

Salt Lake City led with 3 per cent, followed by Cleveland and Denver with 2 per cent; Cincinnati, Fall River, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Washington, D. C., 1 per cent. Columbus, New Haven, New York, Providence and Springfield, Ill., advanced less than five-tenths of 1 per cent.

For the year period May 15, 1924, to May 15, 1925, the 20 cities showed increases. Salt Lake City reported 12 per cent, and Houston 13 per cent. Manchester and Providence were lowest, with 4 per cent.

Churchmen Oppose Injunction; Say It "Perpetuates Injustice"

Washington, June 20.—"The labor injunction perpetuates injustice in industry," says the department of social action of the national Catholic welfare conference, in its weekly bulletin. The churchmen declare that this court process is "high-handed," and that it is the greatest legal handicap to collective bargaining that the workers face.

"Sometimes injunctions are issued against strikes, but at times they are issued against labor officials doing anything to lead the strikers. At other times picketing is enjoined. In such cases injunctions are issued against anyone talking to a working man anywhere in connection with he should join the union," says the bulletin.

"The result is that the courts and the law are brought into play against labor unionism and the efforts to increase wages. Injunctions are issued on the plea that property is to be protected or that a man's business in the community is to be preserved from handicaps, or that an employer's contract with his employes is to be safeguarded.

"The injunction is issued by a judge. Disobedience of the injunction is declared to be in contempt of his court and punishable without a jury trial at his will.

"Injunctions are sometimes issued temporarily and then permanently without serious thought of punishing either contempt or even specific acts of injunctions. They act much as a warning by the court that it would be better for the union to call off the strike soon. With a jail sentence hanging over the heads of the union officials and members, the court is often sufficient to get the men back to work at the old rate of pay, or less.

"Such a high-handed practice of judges, following precedents built up by other judges or made for themselves on the spur of the moment, causes a great deal of discontent, invades the civil rights of the working people and perpetuates injustice in industry."

WHAT THE WORKERS WANT

By FRED HEWITT
Editor Machinists' Monthly Journal

The workers want employment.

Then the worker wants steady employment. He wants to bring about a condition whereby he will feel that each day's work may not be his last.

He wants to work not more than 44 hours per week.

He wants the highest rate of pay possible, or to put it another way, he wants his full share of the wealth he helps to produce. He wants to be employed in surroundings as comfortable as the nature of his employment will permit.

He wants sanitary workshops.

He wants protection against unnecessary risk.

He wants to organize with his fellows and to negotiate with his employer through representatives of his own choosing.

He wants compensation laws passed for his and his family's protection.

He wants to enjoy that full measure of freedom guaranteed to citizens of a free country. He wants the right to live and let live.

These are a few things the workers want, and which they seek to attain through the trade union movement.

So far, partial success has crowned their efforts, but a realization of their desires will only come when they join in a common cause. Then, and then only will the workers obtain those things they want, and to which they are entitled.